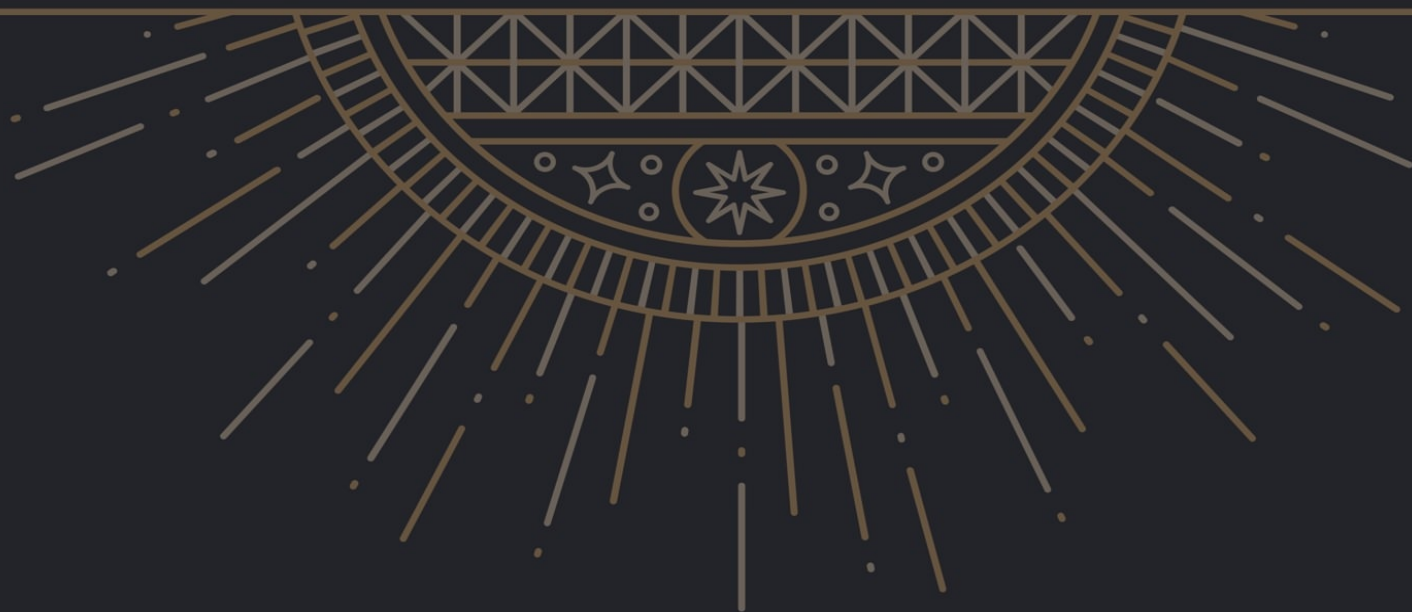




Lazy Dungeon Master



Volume 7 – Your Neighborhood
Salamander

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Chapter 63 – Opening?

It was decided that Rokuko could use her tip however she wanted... It wouldn't be funny if I incurred Haku-san's wrath by using Rokuko's tip.

"By the way, how much did you get?"

"... Around 100,000 DP."

... Wouldn't it have been fine to have just been a little? My heart just skipped a beat there.

The number of gold coins given to the inn is sixty-five. Worth 650,000 DP when bought with DP, it would become 65,000 DP if I converted it into DP. We just got a massive amount, so I should just give up on Rokuko's portion.

I wouldn't hesitate if Rokuko used it for the dungeon's sake though.

If push comes to shove I'll have her loan me some, let's go with that.

Well, that egg is a phoenix or something, but—

"—Come to think of it, can we try and see if the egg can really revive?"

Hopping aboard Rokuko's proposal, we decided to break it then heat it up with a torch.

... Come to think of it, I wonder if anyone here knows the Vietnamese food called hot vit lon?

The boiled duck egg variety.

However, the contents of the egg contains a baby chick just before it hatches. It's classified as a strange food.

Weeell, it's somewhat of a curiosity to me since neither eggs nor chicken meat are considered strange food but a mix of the two is, haha.

Escapism aside, this phoenix egg had that kind of feeling.

Looks like I started thinking about something else for a moment there before this is unpleasant...

Well, burning its body needed a bit of a guro warning. After that, particles of light gathered up around it and it revived back as an egg in place.

Furthermore, its carcass remained. It was so small.

According to Haku-san, it revives by forcibly gathering ambient mana.

Let's try a second time to make sure... Yep, it takes less than a second to revive after being burned, fast. And gross.

"Haku Ane-sama said this guy is delicious to eat right?"

“... Rokuko is considerably mentally strong. My respect.”

“Eh? Ah, un, thanks?”

Any, now to make some hot vit lon... not. Since a phoenix egg [Needs to be inside a fire to hatch], we decided to place it on one of the [Mysterious Torches that Somehow Don't Burn Out] that lit the dungeon. This should be an easy way to care for it so it's fine. It revived even when we dropped and smashed it.

Though a phoenix egg and even its carcass can be turned into medicine and some raw materials... it's worth 0 DP if you try to exchange it as a treasure. It would've been worth so many points if we just kept breaking it though... I think I would've made a golem that automatically kept breaking the egg if it was worth anything.

Also, since she'd probably get fired up about it, I kept Ichika from seeing (= eating) it. The egg would properly revive even if we trampled it. It wouldn't get us any DP though.

*

Several days after forgetting about the flag.

Two average E-Rank adventurers who came to conquer the dungeon stayed at the hotel and managed to hunt goblins on the first floor. Since they were weary of the ton of traps, their progress was slow.

Meanwhile, while I was sleeping and using Meat as a hug pillow as usual, Rokuko jumped in.

“Bad news, Kehma! The tunnel made it through!”

“Fuoh? Finally... wait, hold up, it didn't make it to the other side of the mountain.”

“T-that's why this isn't a time to sleep—!”

Rokuko's never woken me up from my sleep. This is the first time. Honestly, she's been diligent about me telling her to not wake me up unless it's a state of emergency.

Looking at the dungeon map, we dug up a cave somewhere.

When I opened the monitor to see directly from the menu, it was a red cave that spread out.

“Hey, Rokuko... this is...”

“... ... A dungeon that's not ours. What should we do?”

It's probably the [Flame Cavern]. A single red lizard is as big as a medium-sized dog, its red tongue is definitely something you don't want to pick a fight with. Mm, dangerous for golems and eyes.

“Withdraw! Seal the hole!”

“I’ll spend DP to make a wall!”

Ah, sorry for the intrusion~. As though to say that, we pulled the golem back and started making a wall.

Red lizards started rushing towards it instantly... the wall made it just in time.

Bang! Bang! The door started being beaten.

“... Oh crap oh crap, it would’ve been a fight if we were even a little slower.”

“Kehma. No matter how I look at it, the fight already started.”

That’s right, we avoided it but the fight did start. It won’t be funny when the wall gets broken.

“We’ll prepare to intercept them while buying time. Deploy traps in the passage.”

“[Bottomless Swamps] and [Spear Ceilings] then.”

The red lizards broke through the wall, diving towards the interception retrofitted golems that were installing the traps. However, the red lizards fell into the [Bottomless Swamp]. But that monitor lizard, while emitting a lot of hissing steam, just forced its way out without paying it any attention.

While the golems held them back, the [Spear Ceiling] dropped from above, skewering the lizards and submerging them in the marsh. Good, they stopped moving this time.

“... Alright, let’s repair the wall now.”

“Y-yeah.”

To remake the wall, we destroyed about five meters of ceiling and released it from our dungeon rule.

It should be fine with this... wait, what’s that sound?

A loud bang came from the other side of the collapsed passage. Breathing fire, a large mass of red, larger than the red lizards from a moment ago, appeared. It was about half the size of the passage, which itself was around wide enough for two wagons to be able to just pass each other... A wagon-sized monitor lizard clad in flames burst through.

While I was thinking, it dried out the [Bottomless Swamp] and blew away the [Spear Ceiling] with fire, running over and crushing the golems.

[Uooooaaah! Where aaaare yooou!?!]

A salamander.

... Wait, could that be the dungeon core?

He talks with a deep yakuza voice.

For now, let’s try making contact.

Since he was inside our dungeon's passage, I could forward my voice to him. I called him using that function.

“Stop! Dungeon Core No. 112!”

[Ooouuu!? What, you know who I am you son of a biiiitch!? ... Mm? What's this, now that I take a better look this is a dungeon isn't it! The fuck are you!?

When I called out his name, the salamander slammed on his brakes.

Yep, looks like we've met the dungeon core.

“Hiiii—!? N-No. 112—... w-why d-do—! You want to know!?”

[This meager voice, No. 695 huh!? That's my line! The fuck would you tunnel into my dungeon foor!?!]

“Allow me to explain. It was an unfortunate accident, sorry, I apologize.”

[O-ou? Meek aren't you!? Bastard, who're you, the dungeon master!? Show yourself!]

Since he knows we're the dungeon core and master, even though he probably wouldn't suddenly kill us, let's send a golem just instead just in case.

[Aah!? So you're the dungeon master huh!? Wait, you're a golem!]

“Yeah, sorry, I didn't intend to invade your dungeon even if that's what it looks like.”

[Reveal your real body so I can kill you! No. 695 is a human type, how could a golem be her master... hmm? No, maybe it's because even the golem is human type? No no, golems are too stupid to be masters!]

I thought I might be able to trick him for a bit, but looks like that didn't work.

It looks like I could lead the conversation on... he didn't suddenly destroy the golem either, so he probably won't suddenly kill me without reason.

If it looks dangerous I'll just have Rokuko collect me whenever she thinks she should.

So I resolved myself. On foot. It couldn't be helped, I couldn't teleport there since he was treated as an intruder.

Though it was just a long passage with nothing in it, it took a while to walk down it. I was able to exit one hundred meters from it because that's where the goblin room is, so I was able to get there relatively easily.

“... So, how're you going to settle this!?”

The salamander roared. Well, I really was in the wrong here.

More or less like how monsters can directly leave the dungeon core, a dungeon master can directly set up traps and facilities inside the dungeon. They'd die if they let down their guard since the range is just around five meters though.

“Right, I'll apologize. To be specific... I'll patch the hole. Also... right, do you know

about [Dogeza]?”

“... O-ou? [Dogeza] huh, of course! It’s when you bow your head while in [Seiza]! Why did you ask?”

“Ah, our talk will go faster since you know it. There’s another level that exceeds it, have you heard of the [Dogene] apology?” [1]

“Hooou, this is my first time hearing that. So what kind of apology is it?”

Ah, I might be able to deceive him here.

I don’t particularly mind lowering my head, but just doing that might become a problem in the future, so let’s try and trick him.

Though it’s like I’m picking a fight here, we got information from Haku-san about the [Flame Cavern] in advance. It’s fine if I just stall for now.

“Although the [Dogeza] shows apology through bowing one’s head, the [Dogene] apologizes by lowering one’s whole body.”

I layed a futon out on the cave’s ground while giving a suitable explanation.

“Oi, what’re you doing there?”

“Hmm? The [Dogene] apology. It’s a polite apology that takes time to prepare. It’s polite to bring lots of food in preparation you know?”

“Food? I don’t get what you’re saying!”

“... ‘Prepare lots of traps to bring down your prey,’ get what I’m saying by preparations now?”

“I see! I get it.”

I then got into the futon, then spoke.

“This is the [Dogene]!”

“O-ooh! Certainly, apart from your head everything is covered...”

From what it looks like, this salamander seems to believe me.

This guy is... simple.

Let’s push it one step further.

“From here on, I will do the [Dogene] for seven days, five hours a day... no, I’ll do it for eight!”

“W-what!? Eight hours!?”

“Is that not enough!? Twelve hours then! Twelve hours, in other words, I will spend half of the day in this posture! With that, I hope that you can forgive me...”

“U-understood! Kuh—, it couldn’t be helped. There’s no way I couldn’t with you doing that, huh... heh, I wondered what kind of person No. 695’s master was, to think you’re so rational...! However, I’m the one saying it, but seven days, twelve hours every day...

you'll seriously do it!? Great!!”

“Yeah. I understand.”

Then, the salamander returned in satisfaction.

... I don't know when he'll come back, but until then why don't I just continue this [Dogene]? In my room, that is.

Chapter 64 – Stupimander

[That's just sleeeeeeeepiiiiing!!!!]

Blowing away the rubble that buried the passage, the salamander reappeared.

I got exposed on the fifth day.

Took longer than I thought it would. But I really wanted to trick him after going that far. It was such a good excuse to sleep for twelve grand hours...

When I sent the golem to meet him in the passage, I guess he thought I was pretty rational since I introduced myself obediently.

Since I made a room midway through the passage, my [Preparation] this time was that I could teleport there. It's a lot easier than walking.

"Oi... are you fucking with me!?"

"That's rude. I was being serious. So you think that [Dogene] is just sleeping? Unfortunate."

"I-is that so?"

Oh? I didn't expect that reaction... let's try and trick him again.

"Yeah, to begin with, if you think [Dogene] is just sleeping, isn't a [Dozega] just sitting?"

"Ugugu-, e-even so..."

"Even though I went this far to show my apologetic feelings, and even though I went through so much to patch up the wall..."

"Eh-. Yeah, well, uhh..."

"... What will you do to settle this?"

"Mu-mumumu...!"

The salamander just obediently agreed to what I said. Simple. Very simple. Stupimander~

"I-I get it. How about I go and repair my wall..."

"Just that? You won't do anything about scorning my heartfelt apology?"

"... Sorry."

"Well, it's fine if you understand. I also said too much."

"Y-y-y-you're a nice guy huh."

"By the way Dungeon Core No. 112, has your master given you a name? It's hard for humans to keep saying Dungeon Core No. 112, so could you please teach me it?"

"Yeah, it's [112]. My master gave it to me, it means one hundred and twelve in draconic."

It was translated into [112] as usual. It is the draconic word for it after all.

“I see, that’s a good name. But it’s hard for me to pronounce it... I actually came from another world, so is it fine if I just parody 112?”

“Oo! What’s the name?”

Ah, so it affects things like that too. I thought about these kind of things during those five days.

“Ontentoo. If you take one and twelve apart, then divide twelve into ten and two, you get one, ten, and two. Mesh them together and you have Ontentoo. What do you think?”

“Hooh, I like it, call me that name.”

Ontentoo, formerly known as Stupimander, smiled in delight.

“Yeah, Ontentoo. I’m Masuda Keima.”

“Kehma huh, I’ll remember it.”

Ontentoo then went back in high spirits. As expected of Stupimander, tricked him again.
... Yep, looks like naming that guy didn’t overwrite the one his master gave him.

*

“I thought something was off!!”

Then, Stupimander Ontentoo came back three days later.

These ones are pretty quick~. The party that was exploring our dungeon just got replaced. There’s a D-Rank party and two E-Rank parties this time.

They memorized the traps and were practicing against the goblins and golems or something. It seemed like the adventurers that came this time weren’t that interested in treasure. Thanks to that I don’t have to go out of my way to replace the expensive treasures, so they’re saving me a bit of DP with that.

We’re also getting more guests at the inn. Rokuko is in charge of meals and Ichika is working at the reception desk. I went around the rooms using Cleanup on them.

Well, I haven’t been doing that recently because I’ve been busy with [Dogene]. Hahaha.

“Oh, Ontentoo. Welcome back. So, what’s off?”

“My master said it! You’re lying to me! I tried out the [Dogene] so that I could demonstrate your apology, there’s nothing difficult about it! Even master tried it out in human form, it’s completely comfortable!”

He went out of his way to try it out? What a faithful chap.

So a dragon can change into human form huh...

“Ontentoo can’t do a [Dogene] to begin with though. It’s not painful for a salamander to stay standing right? That much is natural, since the structure of your body is different from a human’s.

“I-is that so?”

“And wouldn’t a dragon’s human form just mimic the appearance of a human? In reality, wouldn’t their stamina be disproportional to a true human? I’m a normal human, I’d be troubled if you compared me to that. I’d be burned if I tried to lay down in the [Flame Cavern] you know?”

“Ooh... that’s right too.”

“To begin with, doing the [Dogene] is so painful to humans that they lose consciousness you know? Even I repeatedly lose consciousness doing it...”

“W-what’s that!? So that was it huh...”

Well, my opening my eyes would be painful when I’m falling asleep!

“So, what did Ontentoo want me for?”

“U-umuu... I-I wonder?”

You’re asking me? I don’t recommend that.

“Got it, looks like you’re still dissatisfied... I guess twelve hours a day of [Dogene] wasn’t enough huh?”

“W-what do you mean?”

“Well I’ll add another person, my subordinate, and have them do it as well!”

“W-what!?”

“Moreover, I’ll restrain them myself, making is so that they can’t move. A forced [Dogene]!”

“What the—! ... Hmmm, if you do so, that will be plenty. Kehma, your determination is firm. I understand.”

Ontentoo left yet again.

At this pace he’ll be back in a day I guess?

... Well, as promised, I went back to sleeping with Meat as my hug pillow. As usual.

*

“No matter how I think about it isn’t the [Dogene] just sleeping!?”

“Hmm? Oh, Ontentoo, you came back huh? So much free time~”

Ontentoo came yet again one day after that... well, he came the next day.

On his head was a red lizard-tailed... no, crocodile-tailed girl.

“... You are?”

“My master!”

“Oh—! So you’re the bastard that kept tricking this one’s Danna-sama!?” [1]

Isn’t his master a red dragon? So that’s a dragon tail huh. So Ontentoo’s her husband?

“By the way, this one purposely changed into human form since this one’s original form was too large to pass through, be thankful!”

“My goodness, thank you very much for doing that.”

“Yeah, good isn’t it! You’re welcome!”

The red dragon girl threw her chest out in satisfaction.

“So, what is dissatisfying Oku-sama?” [2]

“Oku-sama... yeah, this one is an Oku-sama! Right, 112!?”

“Yeah, Oku-sama is my love. Redra, love youuu.”

Oi, don’t just go and suddenly act out a play in my dungeon. Leave first.

“Ah! That’s not it, you kept cheating him! Guys like you...—”

“Oh? That so? Oi Kehma! What’d you do!”

Eeeh. I didn’t do anything you know? Is that it? They’re the type that gets fired up easily?
... This couple looks like they’re comrades in idiocy!

Chapter 65 – Negotiations with the Red Dragon

“So, what could be dissatisfying Oku-sama? I thought that I’d apologized enough with the [Dogene]?”

“O-Oku-sama... ehehe... ah—, that’s not it! Is that [Dogene] thing seriously an apology!?”

Oh, straight to point huh. Her head might not be so bad.

“Going to the point of lowering one’s entire body and not just their head, there is no higher form of apology. Oppositely, what posture does Oku-sama take as a form of apology?”

“Mu—... umuu, now that you say it, that’s right... this one lies down and shows her belly... or something!?”

“I see. So isn’t the [Dogene] much the same?”

“Huh!? How!?”

“It is the same posture. However, for you to still not believe my apology is sincere despite me going this far... I am saddened.”

“N-no, it’s not that this one doesn’t believe you—”

I wonder if hanging my head and looking at my hands was a bit much...? I decided to show her some charades, but that red dragon reacted like she did something bad to me. As expected of Stupimander’s Oku-sama huh.

“Is that sooo, so if you really believe me... in truth, I dug this tunnel so that we could pass through the mountain from our side, is there any way we could work something out?”

“... Not possible!”

“Oh... Oku-sama, so in other words you don’t believe me...”

“No! That’s not it! Mmm, Tsuia Mountain is mostly this one’s dungeon to begin with! You can’t open a path through it!”

The red dragon looked flustered when she refused. Hey, wait a second, what did she just say?

“What do you mean by Tsuia Mountain being mostly your dungeon?”

“The mountain. It’s all this one’s dungeon!”

By that, I guess she means all of it is the [Flame Cavern]?

I can’t picture it too well so let’s make a model. Taking out some leftovers from when I made the clay golems, I formed it into the rough shape of Tsuia Mountain while referring

to the map.

“Oh? That’s Tsuia Mountain! You’re good with your hands!”

“Thanks. Let’s see, so if this is Tsuia Mountain, how much is the [Flame Cavern]?”

“About this much!”

About eighty percent of what the clay represented. A bit less than twenty percent or half of the remainder was the size of our current dungeon. It really is just the edge of Tsuia Mountain.

... The [Flame Cavern] is pretty huge.... It would’ve been hard to dig a tunnel without knocking into it.

“Or rather, how long have you been making a dungeon in our mountain!?”

“Oooh, that’s a question for our dungeon core... Rokuko, how long~?”

[Eh? I don’t know exactly, but I think it’s somewhere around ten years?]

She replied back. Ten years huh~...

“Since around ten years ago.”

“We’ve been here for around five hundred years! We were here first!”

“Well, that’s why she’s No. 695... ah? Now that I think about it, No. 695... wasn’t that one a human type?”

Ontentoo was thinking about something that seemed trivial... Setting Stupimander aside, let’s try some negotiations.

Oh fellow master of negotiations... show me your skills!

“There’s no way I could pass a tunnel through?”

“No, it looks like you extended the cave this far by chance, but any farther is impossible! This one won’t let a single rat pass through her dungeon!”

“Could you part with just a little so that I could build the tunnel? I’d be fine paying in DP.”

“Ou, 500,000 DP for it then! That much because there are things to move if you extended this cave straight ahead!”

500,000 DP... well, I don’t think it’d cost that much to move things around. Also, overwriting territory, wouldn’t that have to be paid for as well? In other words, she’s overcharging me?

So brazen despite being Stupiwife!

“Even so, I can’t hand over 500,000 DP.”

“That so? Though it’s coming from this one, it’s a pretty great price!”

Hmm, that might not be the market price for exchanging territory, but I don’t know. I

probably wouldn't learn even if I asked Rokuko, so it's impossible to say if paying 500,000 DP for it is actually an unreasonable amount of DP.

Although I want to drive down the price, this red dragon seems like an honest person. It might actually be a reasonable offer.

... Oh, come to think of it I just got a few gold coins huh?

"Would fifty gold coins work?"

"What use are gold coins? You're stupid huh, it can't be used if it's not DP!"

The red dragon refused with a smile.

So it's no good huh. It would've been great if I could pay in gold.

... No, wait a second. Dragons should love shiny things, let's try actually showing it off.

I took out a single shining gold coin and held it in my right hand to show it off to the red dragon.

"Hahaha, 10,000 DP for a single gold coin... such a was—... O-oooh it's this awesome!?"

Hook, line and sinker~~~! When I slowly moved my hand back and forth, the red dragon followed it with her eyes. She looked to the right when I moved right and to the left when I moved left. She's completely captivated by it.

Ah, still though. My opponent's still not sold on it huh?

I took out a silver coin and polished it till it shined and held it in my left hand.

"I'll give one silver coin for every ten gold coins if you sell now."

"Wha—! T-that's, heeeh, really!?"

"Really! I would never lie!"

Moving the silver coin in my left hand in a circle while I said that, the red dragon's whole face followed it.

Alright... time for one last push.

"B-but, hmmm...?"

"Oh, Oku-sama, are you still not satisfied? ... That's fine, then as a one day special, today only, I will add this service! Today! Right here! Only if you agree to accept the fifty gold coins as 500,000 DP! In addition to the extra silver coins, you will receive as a present... this crystal knight figurine!"

"Uoooh!?"

The moment I put the transparent and shining crystal knight figurine on the table, the red dragon's eyes opened wide. [1]

The crystal knight figurine was twenty centimeters tall. I made it with mana potion bottles.

“T-this is... it’s like it could move at any moment...! Wonderful!”

It really could move if I wanted it to. It’s a golem after all. It sparkles and reflects a ridiculous amount of light since it was something made for a dragon’s interests. The red dragon’s eyes were sparkling so much that they wouldn’t lose to it though.

“This offer only stands only if you give an agreeable response right now.”

“A-alright! Isn’t it great 112!?”

As though she were a child pleading for a shiny toy, she clapped her hands against Ontentoo, who was thinking about something in a daze.

“Aah? ... Wait, right now, feels like I forgot something serious.”

“Muuu, hurry up! This one can’t get that figurine if we don’t answer right now!”

“Aaah, can’t be helped huh.... Ah. I remembered!!”

Ontentoo suddenly raised his voice to a roar.

“No. 695 is that No. 89 the [Betrayal]’s comrade isn’t sheeeee!!!”

Roar! Fire expelled from his mouth.

... Haku-san, this dungeon core is calling you a [Betrayal]. Well, you do hunt other dungeon cores I guess.

Chapter 66 – The Second Dungeon Battle

“Eh—, s-so this one can’t get the knight figurine then?”

“No! That [Betrayer]’s comrade is an enemy!”

“Enemy! That’s a long word! What’s it mean? Please say it in draconic!”

“Enemy means [Something You Should Trample]!”

“Enemy means [Something You Should Trample]!? This one is itching for a fight!”

Oi, that’s what [Enemy] means in draconic? As expected from the strongest kind of living creature, they look down on things with all they have.

“We’ve been negotiating with them about territory though! This one wants that knight figurine you know!? This one wants it by any means!”

“Yeah... Oi Kehma, what now?”

He just called me an enemy and now he’s asking me. Make up your mind already, oi.

Is it that? Was the master’s absolute command used? Something like [Hurry up and get it] or [By any means]?

“Oi oi, Ontentoo. I’m not your enemy you know?”

“Don’t say something lonely like that. That was for that dungeon core. You, I’m pleased with.”

So that was it. I’m also pleased with you, you know? You’re simple to talk with after all!

“I also want her to have the crystal knight figurine. That doesn’t mean for free though.”

“Really!? You’re a good guy after all. So, what to do then? It can’t be territory.”

“Hmm. It’s easy then. We’ll have a dungeon battle for it then. If we lose, we’ll give the fifty gold coins and freebie silver coins, as well as the crystal knight. In return, we’ll get the territory if we win. We won’t need to negotiate since the match will decide it if we do that. Sound good?”

“Hooh... well that should be alright. But doesn’t our side have the advantage...?”

“For that, I want to propose two irregular rules.”

Irregular rules. For example, like how the victory condition in the dungeon battle we had against Haku-san was to touch the dummy core rather than the dungeon core.

“First, you would be devoting yourselves to defense rather than offence. If you can hold out, it’s your win... how about one day for the length?”

“Hoh, a defensive battle huh. But our dungeon is very deep. Conquering it in one day is impossible.”

The dungeon certainly is five hundred years old, so there are quite a few floors.

“That’s where the second rule comes in... Our dungeon has five floors right now. So for [Equality], it’ll be our win if we can advance further than the fifth floor. Sound good?”

“Ooh, that would make it equal. Fine then. We’ll give you territory for this tunnel if you can win.”

No, that’s not equal at all.

You could easily invade beyond the fifth floor in a dungeon battle with half a day. I’d have a full day along with being able to fully concentrate on invading.

Additionally, I’ve been making preparations for the invasion in advance for a while now. It’s completely my advantage.

“While we’re at it, yeah. If you can touch the dungeon core on the bottom floor... this one will give you half of Tsuia Mountain.

She said that, getting caught up in the moment. Even so, even Stupimander Ontentoo’s eyes opened wide in surprise.

“Wha—!? W-what if they actually did it!?”

“What’re you saying? There’s no way they could make it to the bottom floor in a single day you know?”

“Y-yeah! Of course. A day huh... oi Redra, you sure?”

“Isn’t it fine!? I just want to get that figurine you know!? Along with dealing with the [Enemy (Something You Should Trample)] we also get the gold and silver coins, aren’t those only good things!?”

They don’t think that they’ll be defeated at all.

“But they’ll get the territory without paying the gold coins if they win right?”

“There’s no way this one will lose with equal conditions!”

“Then the conditions are fine I guess?”

“Yeah! So, let’s do it, how about right now!?”

Honestly, right now? Well, it’s not like I couldn’t.

But it’d be bad to rush it if I want to make this a certain win.

“Our dungeon will need to prepare...”

“Well then, it will be after a week.”

“Ooh, that sounds good. Then, we’ll head back.”

“But it’s fine for me to have that figurine right!? Right!?”

“... Please take it.”

I grinned.

*

“... So, can we win?”

Rokuko asked me that as soon as I returned to the inn.

I answered while patting Meat, who always rushes over to be my hug pillow, on the head.

“What’re you talking about, Rokuko? The outcome is settled you know?”

“... Eh? How?”

Rokuko tilted her head to the side, confused.

Looks like she hasn’t noticed yet... still naive?

While showing Rokuko the map, I explained it to her.

“Our easiest victory condition is to get past the fifth floor of the [Flame Cavern].

“They said that.”

“How about you, Meat? Do you get it?”

I asked Meat, who was watching the negotiations along with Rokuko. Although Ichika was working at the reception desk and wasn’t here, she probably would’ve grinned from understanding me if she saw it.

As for Meat, she answered after thinking for a moment.

“... .. Umm, the... figurine?”

“Eh? What about the figurine?”

Oi, Meat’s pretty clever. Better than the dungeon core.

“Because... that figurine, it’s Goshujin-sama’s golem... right? Then, it’s an ally...”

“Eh? That thing, didn’t you give it to them?”

“I did say they could take it, I don’t recall giving it to them though.”

“But you said it was a present?”

“That was only the case if they accepted the gold coins for 500,000 DP. It’s a different story now since they didn’t go for it.”

It may be a heartless pretext, but it still belongs to us. It wasn’t a present.

And seeing as it’s my golem, it’s obvious that it’d be under my control. It’s part of my forces.

... Even if she’s the one to put it in a treasure room, it doesn’t change the fact that one of my men made it past the fifth floor.

If things go well, we might even be able to touch the dungeon core’s main body.

If by some chance I'm wrong, as in if the treasure room is above the fifth floor, it'll already have been carried pretty deep down.

"Our win is decided."

"... Is that fine?"

"I can confirm where it is on the map and can see and hear through the golem. Though there's no problem even if I send my troops to crawl to a lower floor, is something wrong with that?"

"... Really. Uwaah, so cruel."

A general once said: "What is war? Something where victory or defeat is decided beforehand."

I agree with it.

"But that's just a last resort. If possible I want to win without letting the crystal figurine golem getting exposed... That way, we can eavesdrop on their conversations whenever. That way we can have an overwhelming advantage over them from now on."

"Kehma, your face says you're thinking about something bad... you're reliable!"

But to the end, [I'll do it if I can].

I'll do whatever I can if I can't win through normal means. I even want the crystal figurine golem to touch the dungeon core without being exposed if it can. Since I'll be using special golems from now on, maybe I should [Unveil] it soon? Getting half of Tsuia Mountain might be enough compensation for using my trump card.

It's fine even if we just win the tunnel part. We don't need the mountain to extend the dungeon down underground...

"Well, whatever works."

I stopped thinking about it since it was getting troublesome. Let's just focus on the most important preparations. That is, winning however we can.

Chapter 67 – Information Gathering (Eavesdropping)

“Alright, have to go do the [Dogene] today as well~”

“Kehma has it hard huh, having to do the [Dogene] every day... for twelve hours even. Well, Meat not working while she’s being a hug pillow just makes more work for me though.”

“Hmm? Rokuko doesn’t want to work either? But the golems take care of most everything, you just need to take out the food right?”

“... I wasn’t thinking that the golems were reliable enough to do it themselves you know. Really.”

Putting on the specially made gloves and shoes clay golems made for the inn’s odd jobs, I worked while making sure to listen to what Rokuko and Ichika said.

I didn’t really need to do it though. They were just serving dishes. Adventurers that make trouble put pressure on the guild, so I just washed and cleaned everything in one go with [Cleanup]. [1]

“Meat can use [Storage], so it’s alright for me to not bring people food.”

“... No, it’d be weird if Meat worked in the dining room to begin with since she’s a hug pillow. Right?”

“Yes! I am a hug pillow!”

Her doggy ears perked up and her tail wagged while she gave that great answer.

You really don’t want to work huh. As expected of my hug pillow.

When I stroked her head so that I could hold and feel her amazingly good feeling doggy ears, she closed her eyes and her body quivered.

“Mumumu... then properly praise me too!”

“Hmm? You truthfully have my thanks for everything you know? I wouldn’t be here if Rokuko wasn’t here.”

Thanks to becoming a dungeon master, I’ve gotten more time to sleep than when I was in Japan.

I don’t even have to worry about food because I can buy it with DP.

“I’ll be relying on you from here on too, Rokuko.”

“T-that much is normal! Fufun, well I’m fine even if I don’t rest!”

Rokuko left in a good mood.

... Being fine even if you don't rest huh. That'd be seriously dreadful. There's no way I could stand that.

*

"Well, that guy's pretty good huh!"

"Yeah. If only they weren't with that betrayer..."

The dungeon master of the [Flame Cavern], the red dragon Redra. And Dungeon Core No. 112, Ontentoo.

The two were currently talking about their two neighbors that suddenly made an appearance.

"Also gave me a new name, Ontentoo huh."

"Eeh, but this one likes the name she gave you better!"

"Haha, looks like it's hard for humans to say though. Well, the name I got from Redra is more important."

"You saying that makes this one happy! You're this one's lovely Danna-sama after all, [112]!"

Redra called Ontentoo [112] in draconic, but unless you knew the language you would probably just hear nothing but roars if you didn't have a translation skill.

Although it was a hard for humans, Redra could speak it fluently even when she changed into human form.

"But this crystal figurine's so coooooool with its sparkles isn't it!? Fuehehe..."

"It is, though I'll have to go through some trouble now."

Seeing Redra's face slacken from obtaining the treasure she'd set her eyes on, Ontentoo let out a small puff of flame in satisfaction.

"... Yeah, we're doing a dungeon battle. Have to show signs of a [Transition Phase]."

A [Transition Phase], according to what was taught to other dungeon cores before, dungeons would drive the obstructive humans away during a dungeon battle. That way, even if the structure is entirely different after the dungeon battle, they won't question it. Ontentoo was aware of that.

Increasing the amount of traps, somewhat narrowing the passages, increasing the amount of monsters and the appearance of monsters that didn't normally appear were all signs of a [Transition Phase]. Even so, it was a convenient cover story for a dungeon battle.

... Then again, the origin of the rumor came from Dungeon Core No. 89 the [Betrayer]. Ontentoo couldn't figure out why she started it. He was just impressed that there were

people that fell for something that was too good to be true.

“Now then, how about adding more traps and monsters?”

“Hey hey [112]!? It’s this one’s turn to do it right!?”

“... Yeah, make sure to do it properly yeah?”

“No problem...”

As for Ontentoo, he just wanted Redra to summon monsters.

Even if she was the dungeon master, she was his dear wife. Then again, since she herself said that she [Wanted to rage], he hesitated. In truth, this [Flame Cavern]’s biggest strength was the boss, Redra. There wasn’t a reason for her to not make use of her.

“... Since the boss room is going to get made on the fifth floor, wait for them there. We’ll lose if Redra is defeated ye know?”

“It’ll be fine, this one is an authority on dealing with small fry!”

Kakaka! Redra laughed cheerfully. Seeing the way she looked, he couldn’t imagine her being defeated at all.

“Kukuku, you’re having fun. But that Kehma fellow, his face said he had some kind of plan... Well, at worst even if we lose he’d get to the fiftieth floor, there’s no way he’d get half the mountain yeah?”

*

All of that was happening in the [Flame Cavern] and was seen by the crystal knight golem.

“I see, so the boss room will be on the fifth floor... and the fiftieth floor, huh. I see, so the crystal golem’s mark is around there.”

“Muu, I wonder how many traps were added. I don’t know that well since the number one hundred and twelve is moving on the menu.”

Concerning the menu, only I can see it unless I decide to show it, so I understand. I didn’t expect that much to start with though.

Ah, by the way, this video is a recording. In reality I was asleep when this happened. I was unconscious due to the [Dogene]. I had to lie face up, face down, and even turn sideways. I was really busy after all. Busy.

“... Kehma, can you win against a dragon?”

“Well, I don’t know since I’ve never fought against a dragon. I have a plan though.”

Even if the dungeon itself is somehow made countermeasures, the dragon doesn’t

understand them at all. Maybe the air-headed red dragon is just that strong?
Well, our win is decided so let's just rest.

I don't have to renovate this time, so it's fine to just take it easy with the preparations.
Suggesting for this to be a defensive battle was the right call after all.

Chapter 68 – Second Dungeon Battle, Onset of War

[Oh, Kehma. Good with your preparations?]

“Yeah, I’m good any time.”

[Kuhahahaha! I like your spirit, human! Come to where this one is fast okay? You don’t have any time to waste!]

“T-there’s no point in shouting you know!?”

It was the day of the dungeon battle. I was standing next to Rokuko in the master room. Meat and Ichika were also together on standby... Eh? What about their inn duties? Yep, I’ll know it if a guest comes into the region surrounding the inn and dungeon, so it’s fine if I just forward them to the dining room before they arrive at reception.

There’s also my trump card of having the golems serve them.

With the fight being the splendid length of a single day, there’s no beating this perfect situation. I was thinking about that while en route to sleep with my indispensable favorite pillow... Most of all, it seems that mutual dungeon core battles can potentially last for a few days. A day is a comparatively short-term decisive battle...

[This is the last confirmation. The battle is one day, there will be no offensive movements from us for twenty-four hours, just defense. If I win, we get fifty gold coins, five silver coins, and the crystal figurine. If Kehma wins, you get enough of [Flame Cavern]’s domain to pass the cave through.]

“Oi oi, you’re missing the victory condition. When I exceed the fifth floor... I win if we reach the sixth floor or beyond, in addition...”

[Forgot about that. If you manage to touch the dungeon core on the bottom floor, we’ll give you half of Tsuia Mountain. So, sound good?]

“Yeah. Don’t forget that okay? By the way, how far down is your last floor?”

[Hahaha! Foolish, you think I’d tell you something like that? But don’t worry, it’s not three digits.]

Concluding the confirmation of our victory conditions, I asked Rokuko and them if they were ready with their preparations.

“Goshujin-sama, the golem corps, are ready, whenever.”

“Ya made ’em to be ready whenever... uuuuum, we’re also good.”

The golems were left to Meat and Ichika respectively. Our main war potential this time is the golems. I got a hold of a lot of materials to use after all... still as expected though, strength in numbers. Even if I summoned the rats they’d just die in vain this time.

“So then is it fine to start now?”

[Yeah, go for it—]

... It wasn't really disorganized, but that signaled the dungeon battle's start. It's good enough, though I'm the one saying it.

At any rate, our dungeon's spaces connected to each other.

Tsua Mountain's crater that served as the [Flame Cavern]'s entrance and our [Cave of Desires]' fourth underground floor room that no adventurers ever came to connected.

Since we connected at a spot that wasn't the entrance, we could do the dungeon battle without having to close the dungeon... Conversely, we would immediately lose if they could attack us. That's the starting position precisely because we're able to one-sidedly attack.

... Incidentally, that crystal golem was put away and locked up in a treasure storage, so we can't use it.

And so, we were about to invade with the method I've prepared for some time now.

“So Ichika. Open the door.”

“Roger that~”

*

It's been one week since the agreement. Today is the long awaited dungeon battle.

(How did I do it before...?)

Ontentoo was trying to recall, but stopped. That wasn't something to think about now.

Attacking is my specialty...

He muttered.

This time was a defensive battle. His first dungeon battle in this format. The human would attack their defenses, but this was the first time he'd heard something like that being done for a dungeon battle.

“That guy came up with something interesting.”

“112! Is it this one's turn!?”

Though it was obviously unreasonable for them to reach the bottom floor, they might unexpectedly easily be able to get to the fifth floor.

“Aaalright, let's see your fighting spirit, Redra!!”

“Yeah! This one increased the number of red lizards to ten times the usual for today! The passages are overflowing with red lizards!”

Overflowing huh, the red lizards aren't just overflowing in the rooms, but in the passageways as well. All the same, there's probably a bit too many. However, Redra is my wife and it's fine to let her have fun.

"... Well it's probably just the right amount if we're bashing our monsters against each other..."

[So then is it fine to start now?]

"Yeah, go for it—"

With the spaces connected together, it felt like the signal to start with Kehma just now felt a little flat.

... If I remember correctly, it's usually something more. Like starting it with vigor and giving it a roar... I think.

"Mugugu, this one's fighting spirit was dampened..."

"This one's interesting. It's a praiseworthy achievement if his goal was to weaken Redra's spirit."

However, there was no sign that anything entered.

The time limit is one day, there's no way he could take his time for twenty-four hours. Is that alright?

But, I withdrew that idea at once.

A large volume of water flowed in from the other side of the open passage.

"... Huh!?"

Water flooded into the passage like a tsunami. The water hit the [Flame Cavern]'s hot walls and floors, steaming... The water washed away the red lizards as well.

"... HUUUUUUH!?"

It was an unbelievably extreme sight.

This is a volcano. The entrance is normally the top of a mountain. At best the only water that would get it was a bit of rain.

However, enough water poured in to fill the passage... Our vanguard, the red lizards, were washed away in a group by the water's momentum.

The water flowed through the dungeon, reaching the stairs to the second floor with surprising swiftness.

The red lizards were drowning, knocking into walls, and pummeled by other red lizards. The green dots signifying allies were decreasing in number fast.

"W-what just happened!? What in the world is this!?"

"Ha, hahaha... the heck...?"

And yet, this tsunami shows reactions from the enemy. When Ontentoo looked at the monitor to see how many, well, it showed that the whole surface of the map was painted in red.

In other words, this water making its way through was bad. It passed through the second floor already and reached the third floor. The time that had passed so far hadn't even been thirty minutes.

(... To break through the second floor this fast... wouldn't he even be able to make it to the fiftieth floor within the twenty-four hours? Kukuku, there's no way!)

In truth, at the rate of breaking through two floors every thirty minutes, they'd get to the ninety-sixth floor. Almost double the number.

"However, that doesn't mean he can keep going like that."

Ontentoo's actions were precise. He opened a tunnel that lead outside the dungeon so that this water (enemy) wouldn't pass the fourth floor.

He couldn't remodel a floor with an enemy on it. He'd already given up on the third floor. The water promptly reached the fourth floor, but this time it flowed towards the outside of the dungeon. A large amount of red lizards also flowed out.

"... Kukuku, what'll you do now Kehma? Oi, Redra!"

"Eh, ah, huh!? The heck was that for!?"

"Kukakaka! Just letting you know they broke through the third floor! Go to the boss room, they'll be there soon, show them your spirit!"

"Eeeeh!? Isn't that too fast!?"

"Send them back if they're almost dead, don't kill them on accident yeah? Just show them you [Exist]!"

"Y-yeah!!"

Redra teleported into the boss room on the fifth floor while flustered.

*

"What's this, so vulgar..."

"What do you mean 'what'? It's water. You know, the foundation?"

"Foundation!?"

That is, the summit only had a single entrance and exit at the top, so it should be appropriate to pour water into it.

Moreover, it would rather be a discourtesy if we didn't pour water into a fire-type

dungeon. I already came to this decision when we heard the information about it from Haku-san.

And so, on dungeon's first floor... I set up a perfectly secret room with a [Water Source] installed at its ceiling. Then when the battle began, I opened the door and poured it all out. It wasn't just normal water either of course. I mixed in water fleas. Terribly reasonable price of a set of one thousand of them for 1 DP. Since this world doesn't have microscopes either, they probably can't even see them mixed in the water. They're extremely small so it's hard to use them that easily. They can't move freely and I can't even use them as eyes. However, they showed up as allies. Mapping complete.

Though I made some ball-shaped water golems and threw them in just in case, they were just destroyed on impact when the water knocked them against T-junction walls... Water golems are weak if they aren't wrapped in something.

However, Ontentoo reacted quickly. He opened a tunnel to drain it out of the dungeon. However, I expected that.

"Now then, I didn't use it last time, but the second wave this time is invasion by the golem corps. Rokuko, Meat, Ichika. Plan B is a go. Are preparations finished?"

"Sure thing! ... But 'Plan B'? Seriously?"

"Yes, ready anytime."

"Meat-senpai is frank as always... but let's give 'er a go."

Hearing the three answer, I nodded.

"Alright! Golem Army Corps, forward!!"

Chapter 69 – Second Dungeon Battle, Pursuit

Another large group of hostile reactions appeared on the map. When he took a look, it was a group of golems.

However, it wasn't the kind of golems that Ontentoo knew of.

“...! Oi, the heck's with those golems, they're armed!”

[H-huh!? You're saying they're armored golems!?!]

The golems wore stone armor and helmets, carrying shields, swords, and short spears. And moreover, they appeared to be moving in a systematic rectangular formation. It was like they were human troops.

He couldn't see what was inside it, but they were even carrying a wooden box. Ontentoo thought that it might be something good to reproduce.

“Hahaha! That's amazing, it's the first time I've seen something like this... wait, huh?”

However, as soon as half of the golems appeared, they changed directions and started to head outside the dungeon.

“Huh? What're they thinking? Huh? Are the golems... running away from the enemy?”

Ontentoo tilted his head to the side, but since half of them had already infiltrated the dungeon, he had the red lizards that escaped from the water assault before face them. Although the majority of them had been washed away, there were still approximately the same number of them left as there usually were.

However...

“Tch, even so, they're hard to deal with. They're cooperating better than humans unskilled at cooperating.”

They stopped the red lizard's assault with their shields, skewering them with spears. Even if they breathed fire, the golems in the back row blocked it with their shields.

They completely blockaded against the main force of the red lizards. Then, in the blink of an eye... although it was slower than when the water first appeared, they accurately suppressed their way up to the stairway with the shortest route possible.

An additional group of golems appeared when they suppressed the route. Their bodies also bearing stone armor, they moved to take command. They advanced through the passage that was being defended by their golem comrades, similarly suppressing the

second floor.

“Kuh... these guys’re nuisances... the magma slimes ran away because of the water, and if the red frogs fight against golems, their toxin that’s their main fighting potential won’t even burn them!”

For a fire-type dungeon, their compatibility against a group of golems was hopelessly bad.

(The red minotaurs could do it at least...)

He sighed, but they were set up to first appear on the sixth floor.

“But if they’re just attacking the front... huh!?”

New intruders showed up. However, they weren’t at the entrance.

He looked at the fourth floor on the map. That was where he’d cleared a hole to remove the water earlier. A group of armored golems entered from there.

“Wha—... so that’s where that detached force went!! Hahaha, so that was it! The rest was a faint huh!”

If walls were broken by enemy forces, it was possible to mend them even if there were intruders.

However, it wouldn’t work on the hole he’d opened himself. It wasn’t possible to close up when there were intruders. There was also the remains of the water showing as hostile reactions. Although he might be able to deal with the water if he used all of their capability, there’d just be a second wave of water if he did so. It couldn’t be helped. He might have been able to think up a better plan, but the magnificent faint caught him like a fish.

From now on, that hole... would be a shortcut that could skip the first three floors.

Furthermore, even though this next group of golems that came in were lightly equipped, they were carrying something. It looked like snakeskin... Connected to the other side of the dungeon, it zigzagged many times as it extended.

(What is that thing used for? And just how long does it extend?)

The golems were still carrying it as it stretched on the way.

This group of golems took a roundabout way outside.

(The heck are they doing...?)

Although the group of armored golems invaded into the fourth floor... they didn’t move. It was like they were waiting for something to arrive... even when Ontentoo’s side attacked to repel the invaders, they blocked with their shields, short spears, and swords.

Like that, the golems that stood still were joined up with by the golems carrying the thing that looked like cast-off snake skin.

“What the heck...!?”

Another large group of intruders showed up. They weren't golems. He couldn't see them at all.

However, the snakeskin thing that was being carried by the golems showed a change. It had been flat until then, but was now starting to swell. Then, the intruders began to run through it...

(Perhaps, it might be the same as that water from before?)

It temporarily left the dungeon, before arriving at... the fourth floor's hole. When he looked, they were pushing soil together where they were, making sure that not even a small amount of water could leak out from there.

“Hah, hahahahaha! This guy is fast...!”

Ontentoo was in a pinch, but he renewed his fighting spirit with a hearty laugh.

*

The water continued to pour through the hose using the difference in height. The things being poured were water fleas.

Ah, though I called it a hose, it's more like one from a fire engine. It wasn't to the point that the second wave would flash flood the dungeon, but it could still flood the dungeon.

“Well then, it's Plan B, but let's hear your guys' impressions.”

“When our opponents made a hole to drain the water, the water poured out through the hole. The hole was closed up... then you'll do it again if they make another hole farther down, right...? I think it's awful! It doesn't take their feelings into consideration at all you know!?”

“As expected of Goshujin-sama!”

“Kinda brutish~”

By the way, Plan A went with the pattern of going straight down without it being drained. Plan C goes with the pattern of the water being completely stopped so that we'd have to entirely stop trying it and go we a head-on assault.

Though Plan A was ideal... no matter how you look at it, wanting that to be the case would be a bit selfish huh.

It's just... though we bought the fire engine hose with DP, it was still expensive. I used part of the 100,000 DP for it. It'd be profane to trade the gold coins in for DP, so I borrowed some from Rokuko using the gold coins as collateral. Interest free... It was the most expensive thing this time.

I could think of it as being a waste on this fight which is already a sure win, but it's probably acceptable. I mean, I wanted to submerge them in water... not. It was a necessity to reach the lowest floor. We could quickly capture floors by repeating the flooding. Besides, it's probably not wasteful since we could reuse it at the inn I guess? Yep, yep. A fire engine hose might be alright to sell as a general good... well, it's fine. It's convenient.

"Rather Goshujin-sama, ya don't need me at all? Isn't it 'kay to just attack from the outside?"

I left Ichika with the golem force meant to attack and gain control of floors one by one starting from the first.

"... Isn't it fine to just get experience?"

"Well, yah... but isn't it better to leave and reenter from the closed hole?"

"... Right. Go ahead and try that."

Sorry. You're insurance for if Plan B doesn't go well. You're not something unneeded. You were just consequentially unneeded.

"The rat scout force discovered the remaining red lizards. I'm sending golems for a preemptive strike.

"Ooh, I'll leave it to you, Meat."

Furthermore, now there are rats scouting outside the dungeon. They were brought in the wooden box, set free outside the dungeon.

"Kehma, a new hole opened up. On the fifth floor. Moreover, it's at the boss room."

"As expected, defeating the boss by drowning it didn't work huh."

However, even though they came up with a countermeasure, I didn't give up.

By the way, the boss room looks like it's a boss room. We can't advance farther if we don't defeat the boss. It doesn't look like even a single drop of water could make it through the door inside it. In other words, there's no choice but to defeat the red dragon here.

It's a very bad game when what looks like the last boss of a fifty-floor dungeon appears on the fifth floor. Even bad balancing has its extremes.

"... So then, it's dragon extermination now huh?"

An armored golem peeked through the hole.

[Gyaaaaaaoooooooooooo!]

Immediately after that, the vibrations were transmitted to the monitor. Then a white light.

Then nothing.

The other golems saw what happened. It was dragon breath. The incredible heat covered the armored golem, instantly melting it... Just how hot is that fire to be able to melt stone equipment!?

[Kakaka! How's this one's breath!? It can even melt their stone bodies you know!? Well well, it looks like this one's breath is a little hot for your puppets!]

The red dragon laughed in triumph. Her body was overflowing with power, enough to make us recognize her existence as a strong person. It wasn't something you would imagine from her form when she was together with that Stupimander.

“K-Kehma? C-can you win!?”

“... No clue.”

... Seriously, I have no idea if we can win against this thing known as a red dragon. However, we've already won this battle. Let's give it a shot.

Chapter 70 – Second Dungeon Battle, Boss Round One

[Gaoooooooooooo!!!]

The ground shook from the red dragon's roar.

The dangerous and intimidating feeling transferred through the monitor. So this is the thing known as a dragon huh.

“... Sorry Goshujin-sama, I wet myself.”

“I might've as well, that dragon... [Cleanup].”

“Hyafu—... T-thank you.”

When I used [Cleanup] on Meat, she became clean. I wonder if Rokuko and Ichika are alright?

“A red dragon is somethin' at a level that even an A-Rank adventurer party would need a scapegoat to just barely win. There's nothin' wrong in E-Rank adventurers like Meat-senpai and Goshujin-sama wettin' themselves. Is Rokuko-sama 'kay?”

“I'm fine, I can use [Cleanup] myself after all.”

Looks like Rokuko was no good.

Well, back to the topic at hand, we have to deal with that red dragon somehow.

... Nothing to do but to give it a shot.

*

“Kakaka! In the end, you're no match for this one!”

Melting the golems with her breath, Redra laughed loudly.

[As expected of Redra, but be careful yeah?]

“112 is a worry wort! Can't you see, they're gone in a single hit!”

Although she was indeed surprised when the water flowed through their dungeon, there wasn't any damage since it was only to the extent that the floors were a bit wet after Ontentoo made the hole. However, the water had hostile reactions. Redra inclined her neck, wondering what the heck was going on.

(Slimes... no, this many of them? Something even smaller... something that can fuse with water?)

Then, Redra felt the presence of a new golem, breaking her train of thought.

“Wha—, how many times does this one have to... wai—... o-oi!? Wait a second!”

[Huh? What’s wrong, Redra... uoh, this guy...]

Redra, who started to breath fire, stopped and swalled it back in a panic. Ontentoo wondered what caused it, but understood when he saw the golems that came in.

The golem was holding a crystal figurine instead of a shield.

“O-oi! That’s—, can this one get that if she wins!? It’s a pair to the other one!”

[Hahaha! You can’t use your breath, such a detestable guy.]

The crystal figurine would also be destroyed if she used her breath. It wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say that she accepted the dungeon battle because she wanted the figurine, she never thought one would be used as a shield.

“Ku—, then if I use my claws directly...!”

Redra tried to crush the golem directly with her claws. However, a dragon’s huge claws couldn’t perform fine adjustments. Her claws were suited for mowing down enemies all at once, she didn’t think she could pull off a stunt like defeating the golem while leaving the figurine (shield) unharmed.

“... Gauuu...”

She was stumped. She couldn’t fight it.

She growled to threaten the enemy golem. If it was a monster that had animal instincts, it would’ve lost strength in its legs, threw away the figurine, and ran away.

The golem that held the crystal figurine pulled out a sword and used it to slash at her.

Not even bothering to avoid the attack since it’d just be warded off, she dared to accept it. ... Kachiiin!! With a strange sound, Redra’s scales were damaged.

“Uoooh!? A magic sword!?”

She retreated a step in a panic. However, the crystal figurine was almost dropped by getting caught up with the tip of her wing. She folded her wings in as much as possible, trying to make sure it didn’t break.

“Ugu—, this is tricky...!”

The golem approached again, holding up the figurine (shield).

Redra retreated again. She didn’t want to injure the precious treasure. That was all she

thought about.

“Mmm, what can I do... wait, huh?”

She had stepped backwards in order to retreat, but she noticed that the floor had started to flood unnoticed.

The water was flowing about. When she looked, the hole made in order to drain it out was being closed with golem hands... Probably, the hostile reactions were from the water.

“Crafty...!”

She inhaled so that she could use her breath on the golems that were blocking the drainage, but the golem she was running away from beforehand cut in front of her... it was holding the crystal figurine.

“—!!”

She once again swallowed the breath she was about to unleash. Fwoosh. Heat that she didn't gulp back down leaked from her mouth.

“Then this one will just use her claws to break the passage!”

[Oi don't do that Redra, that's outside the boss room. If you leave the boss room... they can break through the floor.]

So long as the boss was in the boss room, it was even airtight.

On the other hand, if there was no boss in it, the water that had a hostile reaction could flow into the following floor... In other words, the fifth floor would be conquered and it would be their defeat.

Having said that, Redra still wasn't able to attack her enemies, it wasn't a situation that they could let continue. Although it was feasible for Redra to just run away for them until the day is over considering her specs, she grew impatient and shouted.

“What should this one do!? Do anything 112, this one definitely can't fight!”

[... Aah, can't be helped...]

And so, Ontentoo, who was Dungeon Core No. 112, absolutely had to answer her request. Even if it meant defeat, it wasn't much of a problem.

*

[Oi Kehma... How about a trade?]

A transmission came from Ontentoo while we were stalling for time transporting the set of dragon goods... A trade huh.

“Depends on the contents. What do you mean by trade?”

[Give us that crystal figurine. Then, you can pass the fifth floor.]

... In other words, they're fine losing if they get the crystal figurine. That kind of thing.

[Incidentally... it'd be great if you didn't use a trick that kept Redra from being able to attack.]

“Giving you the figurine to past the fifth floor is fine, but I'm hard to please... It'd be better if you didn't interfere with us getting to the final floor.”

[Ah? Aah... In that case you'd fight Redra. The last boss room is no good. Everything else is fine.]

Eh, can I? I only wanted to say it though.

Rather, it felt like something was a bit off in that statement just now. Is it because of the absolute command rights?

[It's a lot better than making holes on each floor of our dungeon to keep it from flooding. We'll settle this with a do-over at the original boss room to decide the battle. How about it?]

I see, looks like getting flooded is quite a hard thing.

In truth, it'd probably be a serious matter for their monsters if they got flooded.

“... Then do not obstruct us from here on until the boss room. Release locked doors and traps. There'll be a one hour intermission.”

[Alright! Trade complete. Oi Redraaa, one hour cease fire!]

And so, we restarted with strangely advantageous conditions.

*

“Gunununu...”

“Oooi, didn't you say do anything, Redra?”

“B-but we lost the dungeon battle... sorry, 112! For this one, you...”

Redra was being unusually meek, but Ontentoo just laughed it off.

“What're you saying? I mean, we didn't really lose out. Didn't you get the crystal figurine?”

“But now they can head up to the forty-ninth floor without us resisting...”

“Think you’ll be defeated? Kehma would’ve somehow gotten there from the fifth floor anyways, don’t mind it.”

Moreover, in truth, the dungeon wouldn’t have just been cleared if the water attack continued. It would have flooded every floor, dealing a great deal of harm to the monsters and traps. It was clear that the repair costs alone would’ve exceeded 500,000 DP by itself.

“... That being the case, since we agreed to fight in good spirits, wasn’t the negotiation a win? Redra can be counted on after all.”

“Un... this one will do her best!”

“Yeah, I’ll leave it to you, Redra. You could probably even fight them at full strength for the entire day right? You love it after all.”

“Un!”

Redra was back in high spirits. Ontentoo patted her head in satisfaction.

Chapter 71 – Second Dungeon Battle, Boss Round Two, Conclusion

Guided by red minotaurs, the golem corps made their way to the stairway. The red lizards and flame hounds I could see in the surroundings weren't interfering. Seriously surreal.

[Redra is eager, hurry up and get there with the guidance yeah?]

It was said in a way that made me doubt if that's what he really meant. Maybe he really doesn't mean it and it's due to the absolute command rights?

Following them, there really were stairs. Moreover, they were newly constructed stairs made to continue down directly. The stairs are more like a mansion's than a dungeon's... it took around an hour to get to the forty-ninth floor. Even their hospitality had a limit. Though he did say it was better than being flooded.

... There's still a bit more than half a day left. I guess that means Redra will be fighting the entire time?

Red dragons seem to have the ability to be able to fight with their firepower for more than a day. Being able to shoot their breath forever—though they need to inhale—is beyond cheat.

Still, my knowledge about dragons is from Rokuko. According to her:

“Particularly among dragons, red dragons specialize in their physical offensive ability! Haku Ane-sama's white dragon was only defeated since it was an all-purpose type. But, but, Haku Ane-sama's white dragon is...”

Like that, Rokuko spoke about dragons while adding uselessly excessive things. Dreaming of summoning a dragon like Haku-san had, looks like she just heard things about them from Haku.

If she liked it so much, couldn't she have just summoned the dragon with the 100,000 DP...? Eh? She doesn't want a sub-dragon, but the strongest kind? Hahaha, how much DP would that take?

“So, their weak points?”

“Touching the scales under their chin seem to make them mad! Even doing it is hard though!”

Rokuko spoke with a self-satisfied look... what a useless person.

In the end, I still don't know its weak point that well. Haku-san's [They love shiny things] information turned out to be the most useful. As expected of Haku-san, our dungeon's god of fortune.

"... Hey, he said it was fine to go to the boss room, but what'll we do about the dragon in the end? Can we defeat it?"

"Frankly, it doesn't feel like it. Or rather, we don't need to win against the dragon."

"Eh? What'll you do then?"

"... Did you forget about our trump card (crystal golem)? That guy's in the floor below this boss room. I'm saying that due to the result from the trade a moment ago, all of the locked doors... even the treasure warehouse's is wide open. Get it?"

It was our [Trump Card] because we'd only use it as a [Trump Card]. We had [Flexibility] if we didn't use it.

In this way, the curtains raised on our second bout against the dragon in which we had complete victory promised to us.

*

"Gaaaaaaaah!!!"

Wielding all of its power, the red dragon filled the boss room with plenty of its strength.

Redra moved her head to the side while exhaling a breath.

With just that, many of the armored golems' bodies were partially destroyed. However, the parts that were destroyed were immediately replaced.

"Kakaka! Good, good! This one's been looking forward to this!"

Redra laughed in a good mood. When she swung her tail while laughing, the hands and feet of the golems behind her were blown away. She even broke the wall.

Although the room's floor melted into magma by her breath, Ontentoo immediately repaired it.

"Nooow, dance, dance, dance for this one!"

Perhaps the golems' storages would be exhausted, or perhaps we'd run out of time... at any rate, it didn't feel like Redra would exhaust herself. At the very least, she'd be able to fight at full strength for a day. Red dragons were very resistant to heat, their special characteristic being that of ruling over fire, so breathing out flames the whole time wouldn't burn their throat or mouth like other dragons and could just continue as much as they wanted to.

When it came to combat, they were the strongest.

That was what a dragon was... particularly, this existence (boss) known as a red dragon.

Consequently, very few people have challenged her throughout the years. That's why she's fighting with such abandon after such a long time. She was enough to invade and fight as many countries as she felt like, but Redra didn't have the hobby of bullying the weak. Besides, it might also be her work as the dungeon master and her husband, Ontentoo, and hesitated parting from Tsuia Mountain.

So because of those things, she was having a lot of fun even if her opponents were simply golems. She couldn't help enjoying herself.

However, it looked like the magic swords that the golems wielded were also able to damage Redra's prized scales. Even damage piles up on a mountain. Though it was be hard to do anything to her when she was paying attention, damage would properly accumulate when she let down her guard.

It's good. A proper [Opponent].

"Kuuu~, it's irresistible! There's still a lot more right!? Is there enough to let this one enjoy herself!?"

Just gathering enough equipment for the golems costed a considerable amount of DP. That's why Redra was worried about how much inventory we had to let her enjoy herself.

And while such things were happening, a new golem appeared. It had an egg about the size of an ID card in its hand.

(... What's that for?)

Redra wondered.

"Bringing food? Let me roast it!"

Goou! A sorching breath attacked the golem with the egg.

However, the golem didn't melt. Rather, to be more accurate, although the stone armor and helmet melted, the golem's main body and the egg were intact.

"... What!? This one has never seen a golem like that...!?"

It was kind of white, kind of yellow... about the same color as the egg. Now that its armor and helmet were gone, the egg was hard to see; like it was camouflaged.

"Well, no time to talk!"

She attacked with her claws this time. As expected, the golem was even crushed into tiny pieces... however, as for the egg, it was thrown before it was crushed.

It was aimed at Redra's mouth. Using the height of the inhalation that was followed by a breath, the egg was splendidly thrown into the large opening.

“Ogu—!?”

Redra unintentionally swallowed the egg.
However, the egg suddenly stopped while going down her throat.

“Mugu—!? ...!”

As if it grew hands and feet, the egg stopped in the red dragon’s throat.

(W-what is this!?)

It didn’t completely block her respiratory tract. Even though it was big for an egg, it was still too small to block a red dragon’s throat.

However, she choked a little. The egg moved about in her throat while she thought about that. Following the stream of air inhaled, it entered the esophagus... then, the organ that shot her breath. It arrived at her lungs.

“Uuu, geh, this feels, bad—... o-ow, what... igii—!?”

Kashiiin—a blade grew from the egg, sticking into her lung.

“Gah—, aaah—, gaha!?”

Feeling them for the first time in more than a century, Redra writhed in [Pain] and [Suffering]. Even though dragons had strong bodies, without their scales inside their body, it wasn’t worth talking about how much damage would be dealt. Only the stomach was special. Nothing’s supposed to get into your lungs to begin with. Coughing up blood while breathing desperately, she forcefully ejected the egg from her body.

“Gu—, gefu... w-what the heck... was that...”

She had swallowed adventurers and attacked from inside her body before.
At those times... it was no where near this painful. To begin with, dragons are generally able to digest even swords and armor that they swallow. Just getting stabbed by a sword wouldn’t affect a dragon’s stomach in the least.

“So that’s was Ontentoo meant... gu, pe—!”

She vomited out the blood that had collected in her lungs. The wound was already blocked up. This task was accomplished by the vitality of a dragon.

“There probably aren’t anymore...!?”

But when Redra looked, many golems had circled around her, each one carrying an egg...
... As expected, even Redra paled at the memory.

“U-uwah——!?”

She immediately destroyed each golem’s egg. She kept herself from using her breath so that they wouldn’t be thrown into her mouth, going so far as to close her mouth and stop breathing entirely. When all of the golems and the eggs were destroyed, she inhaled deeply.

“Ha, haha, what... the heck, that’s all of them...”

When she thought it was over, Redra lost strength in her wings.

When she looked at the ground for some reason, one of the eggs had fallen there.

(... Missed breaking that one?)

“—!”

Bam! She crushed it under her tail. With this, it’s do—

—Right in front of Redra, beads of light gathered, and the egg revived.

“Wha—!? What is this...!?”

Bang! She destroyed it with her claw. However, it revived once again after several seconds.

“Hiii—!?”

She once again crushed it in the same way. Revived. Crushed. Revived. Cruched. Revived. Crushed...

“What the!? Whyyyyyy!? Uwaaaaaah!”

In a half-crazed frenzy, Redra continued to attack the reviving egg.

*

“Alright, now’s our chance.”

Since Redra was completely the egg’s prisoner (in a deep meaning), I activated the crystal golem to try and look for the dungeon core. I don’t know how much time we’ll have until the hostile reaction appears though.

“Hey, Kehma. Isn’t that my [Phoenix Egg]...?”

“It’s alright, as you can see it’ll just keep reviving.”

By the way, the eggshell golem was made from collecting the phoenix's eggshell, but it obviously didn't get its revival feature. However, the phoenix egg is raised in fire, so I experimented. What I found was that it could withstand even thermite reactions (a chemical reaction that reaches 3,000 degrees Celsius by igniting metallic oxide and aluminium). It didn't even leave a burn.

Well, I made a fully automatic egg-breaking golem.

Even so, there isn't much left over after extracting the insides, so the amount of egg-type golems were limited.

The strategy this time was... egging her.

I thought about using the issun boshi strategy at first, but I didn't think we'd be able to damage the stomach at all. So, my goal was shifted from her stomach to her lungs. [1]

Each and every egg type golem was equipped with hands and feet, as well as having a magic sword golem inside them that I ordered to attack lungs. I also ordered them to hide their hands and feet when they were outside the body.

However, the egg golem is light. If a dragon seriously breathed out, they would quickly be blown away.

Accordingly, I gave her a bit of a trauma. I decided to have her endlessly attack the reviving phoenix egg. After her lungs were attacked, I surrounded her with golems that each held an egg where one was the real phoenix egg. They would throw the egg golems into her mouth if she wasn't panicking. My plan was to give her a trauma... The results are obvious.

"Vulgar."

"Quite a thing~"

I heard Rokuko's impressions before I asked her for them.

But in truth, it would've been awkward if she was killed by accidentally exploding her lung. It'd be horribly bad if they sought revenge, I wouldn't be able to sleep quietly if we weren't on good terms with our next door neighbor. I can't sleep if they bang loudly on our wall after all.

Because of that, I made it so that they wouldn't go to the point of her dying.

"Ah, the dungeon core is here somewhere..."

Manipulating the crystal golem, I looked around outside the treasure warehouse.

To say nothing about other room, the stairs leading up to the boss room on the fiftieth floor was open.

Come to think of it, Haku-san also put the core on the other side of the boss room in the [White Trial] huh. It went up the stairs step by step.

Then, with the room from the boss room still firmly closed, there was the white and

shining dungeon core. I see, so after the boss room was the dungeon core, and after the dungeon core was the treasure warehouse even further inside.

... That's a splendid pedestal. However, if it's just that tall even the crystal golem can climb it. Thrusting its small sword into the pedestal like an ice pick, it climbed upward. And then—

[Oi Redra, pull yourself together! Oi, o—... ooiiii!? What is this guy!?!]
“Touch~”

Using our trump card (crystal golem), we succeeded in touching their dungeon core.

Chapter 72 – The Trap

The day after the dungeon battle, I met with Ontentoo again.

It was to talk about how to deal with the aftereffects of the fight. Looks like he wasn't able to talk to Redra yesterday until he eventually calmed her down.

“Hahaha, as expected of Kehma, that was a golem? Outwitting us with that crystal golem, it was the first time I'd seen one that small. You completely fooled me.”

He didn't seem to worry about his loss as he laughed it off.

“Well... don't you think it was unfair?”

“What, there's no reason to be upset over something I didn't notice, right, Kehma?”

“... Well, yeah. I just figured the only hope we had of winning against a dragon, particularly yours, was a surprise attack.”

“Kukuku, you could have killed Redra there, so thanks, Kehma. Even though you're related to that betrayer No. 89, I'm fine being your ally. No. 695's too I guess.”

Though it was hard to tell with his lizard face, Ontentoo grinned.

“So then looks like it's time to teleport... According to the promise, the way for your cave is yours.”

... Hmm?

“Wait, wasn't the deal half of Tsuia Mountain?”

“Ah? You... that was if you touched the dungeon core on the lowest floor you know?”

“Right, and I touched it with the crystal golem yeah?”

When I said that, Ontentoo responded—

“What're you saying? Don't you know that our lowest floor is the fifty-first floor?”

—with that.

I touched the dungeon core on the other side of the boss room. On the fiftieth floor.

And on the lowest floor, the fifty-first floor... there was only the treasure warehouse, no dungeon core.

... In other words, there was no way to win from the beginning.

“... Oi, Ontentoo.”

“Hahaha! No reason to be upset over something you didn't notice, right, Kehma?”

And now Ontentoo purposely repeated his words from a bit ago.

... Right, so then the trade from yesterday was like that?

Supposing that even if I came up with a way to win after this, the dungeon battle will have already ended with a time out. It's fine to just end it early, I want go sleep.

"Well now we're even, kukuku."

This guy, even though I thought he was just a simple salamander, he's... pretty capable. Let's just chalk this one up as a tie... Yeah, looks like we'll have good relations in the future.

"... By the way, why would it take 500,000 DP to clear the way in your dungeon? To begin with it'd just be releasing it right? At most, wouldn't it barely take 1 DP?"

"Ah. That huh, Tsuia Mountain's center, or should I say it's core? Doesn't matter. It wouldn't be a volcano anymore if it got smashed. So, it'd take 450,000 DP to rebuild it in another location. Remaking the passages and things like that... hah, that's a lot cheaper."

"... Can't it be moved? Left, right, up or down. Anything would work."

When I said that, Ontentoo's eyes opened wide.

"... ... Oooh!? I didn't think of that!!"

Oi, capable or stupid, this guy's definitely Stupimander.

*

Well, because of that stuff, the tunnel that went through Tsuia Mountain was now open. I call it the Tsuia Mountain Penetrating Tunnel... I mean, that's what it is. It's a straight tunnel, but it takes several hours on foot to travel through since it's so long. Most importantly, that's incredibly fast since it would take several days if they didn't use the tunnel, rather than several hours.

In additional, it'd probably be better to set off in the morning after resting for the night at Tsuia Mountain's inn.

Since it was also done cheaply, I also got a promise for them to help hatch the phoenix egg. It really is good thing to have good relations with your neighbors.

A phoenix hatching from the breath of a red dragon... really is amusing. She barely used her breath at the end of the dungeon battle after all. It wasn't enough to hatch it. It looks like it should hatch with a bit more though.

So I set that up with them.

When I went through the tunnel that went through Tsuia Mountain and came to the other side, I could see the sea. I could even faintly smell the scent of the tides drifting through

the air. The atmosphere was different, I guess.

There was a tall hill nearby, so I looked down from there. I saw that there was a port city down there.

I guess that's Pavuera if I'm not mistaken? Looks like that's Ichika's hometown.

... Fish. I wonder if they have the same kind of experience in this world? Right, let's make a sashimi special for today's dinner to celebrate the tunnel's opening. [1]

Maybe it'd be good for Ichika to also visit her hometown for a bit? I don't know what would be said since she's a slave now though.

"Wow... the scenery here's good~"

Rokuko, who'd appeared next to me at some point, said that as the wind blew through her blonde hair.

"It is... Is this the first time you've seen the ocean, Rokuko?"

"Un. I've heard people talk about it before, but... the dungeon core meeting doesn't care about those kind of things."

I still don't really know what the dungeon core meeting is that well, but other than that she's been staying in that small cave this whole time. Alone for such a long time... Well, she has us now though.

Maybe I should expand her world some more after this... When the dungeon is a bit more on track, it might be a good idea to take Rokuko to the human village for a little while.

"You got outwitted this time."

"Gu—... well, yeah, we did... I never thought Ontentoo would use that kind of a plan."

"You completely underestimated that guy~. I was surprised too, I thought Kehma would win for sure."

Even after showing our trump card, we still couldn't achieve the total victory. Though we were able to win with the fifth floor rule, it still feels like a defeat for me.

"But, even though we didn't get half of Tsuia Mountain, this much was plenty. Kehma can manage one way or another, right?"

"That's right. We don't really need to fuss over the mountain."

I said it before, but it's fine if we just extend into the fields and ignore the mountain. We have the path now.

The path, yeah... let's think about seriously taking a toll for using the tunnel. Should I take it depending on how much their stuff weighs when they enter the tunnel?

I'll make a spring with a golem... that'll be good for now.

"Our dungeon is even more amazing now with this tunnel right?"

"Yeah, no matter what happens, we'll have easy income from it after all!"

We're going to open this tunnel to the public. Our dungeon has finally obtained source of easy money.

Easy money. Aaah, that sounds so good. So far, I've built a hotel by using the dungeon's operations one way or another, then worked at it. And I had to work by designing the dungeon and its monster and item arrangements and things like that.

Meanwhile, I'll be able to spend time sleeping without having to do anything by using this tunnel as an income source. I'll occasionally count the toll fees.

"I don't really know what 'ejee monee' is, but it sounds amazing!"

"Yeah, it's amazing. Very amazing!"

Viva easy money! Goodbye work, hello life of getting money without working.

—I can't wait!